

Cal-PASS Transitions

California Partnership for Achieving Student Success
sharing data, sparking intersegmental dialogue, increasing student success

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Cal-PASS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN CURRICULUM

One region recently has taken a significant step toward its *Cal-PASS* adopted objective to reduce barriers between the segments and promote seamless transition for students. Over forty English faculty members – representing three educational segments – met for an all-day workshop to:

- 1) share relevant intersegmental data and articulation,
- 2) present key areas of alignment identified by the region's Intersegmental English Council, and
- 3) introduce, model, and engage in concrete curricular approaches that address the identified areas of alignment.

The workshop was designed to inspire a commitment from the participants to design and implement the methodologies introduced and establish a foundation – region wide – for continued collaborative reflections on teaching practices and student outcomes.

The day-long workshop – put on by the region's Intersegmental English Council – was the product of a two-year conversation, initiated by *Cal-PASS* data.

The Initial Steps

Upon analyzing the data, it became apparent immediately that the dialogue among the region's four-year university,

its community colleges, and its high school districts must intensify. Each segment subsequently hosted a colloquium to share course sequences, descriptions, objectives, assignments, methodologies, as well as sample student work.

The Findings

Through these meetings, a significant misalignment among the high schools, community college, and university levels revealed

Cal-PASS News

- The Los Angeles Community College District – the largest community college district in the world – recently signed an agreement to be a member of *Cal-PASS*. The Los Angeles Unified School District is considering joining as well.
- *Cal-PASS* has entered into a collaborative relationship with the California School Information Services (CSIS) Program – a legislative initiative charged in 1997 with developing and implementing an electronic statewide school information system to facilitate the exchange and reporting of student information by local education agencies (LEAs) to the California Department of Education (CDE).
- The California State University System has endorsed *Cal-PASS* and is encouraging all CSU campuses to become members.

itself – the high schools in the region focused primarily on literature, the community colleges on composition, and the university on argumentation and rhetorical analysis.

The Key Areas of Alignment

In examining the similarities among the Grades 11/12 English Language Arts Content Standards and the course guides for the entry-level course at the four-year institution and the community college transfer equivalent, all three documents showed to have the following requirements in common:

- Students at each level should be asked to read a variety of non-fiction texts with a focus on rhetorical analysis
- Students at each level should be able to demonstrate an understanding of and articulate the argument of a text
- Students at each level should understand contexts and purposes of texts
- Students at each level should examine and use effective structures for writing

- Students at each level should be required to do research

The Workshop

Given this, the workshop sought to contribute to individual and department reflections with regard to strengthening the critical reading and thinking skills of students at all levels by:

- 1) underscoring the value and necessity of working with non fiction texts, as well as of critical reading and thinking skills;
- 2) deepening conceptual understanding of argument and the skills involved; and
- 3) offering concrete approaches to teaching non fiction texts.

What's Ahead

One high school's English Department now looks to serve as a pilot site, engaging in a process of further articulation and training for all of its faculty, collaborative curriculum development, and implementation. The Council will facilitate continued district-wide reflections based on this site's and other individual classroom implementation.

GETTING STARTED: ESTABLISHING A Cal-PASS CONSORTIUM IN YOUR REGION

Your region can join Cal-PASS by:

- ▶ Agreeing to be a part of a regional consortium
- ▶ Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Cal-PASS and developing and signing a regional agreement, based on the Cal-PASS model regional agreement
- ▶ Designating regional partners for data sharing
- ▶ Committing to developing a database and submitting data once each year to the Cal-PASS data warehouse
- ▶ Helping to develop templates for reports for use by consortia members throughout Cal-PASS.

There is no fee to become a member of Cal-PASS, and Cal-PASS staff is available assist you with the development of a consortium in your area. For more information, contact director, Dr. Brad Phillips, by phone at (619) 258-0281 or by email at BPhillips@cal-pass.org.

“When I was first briefed on Cal-PASS, I wondered if this kind of conversation between the segments wasn't already taking place. It sounded obvious. But, in fact, the discussions were not taking place in any systematic way and when they did, they tended to be based primarily on anecdotal information, not hard data. . . . Cal-PASS provides an incredibly productive link for all of us – K-16.”

Richard Leib, Member
Board of Governors of the
California Community
Colleges

“Good information and its integration into teacher-to-teacher discussions are at the heart of Cal-PASS.”

Omero Suarez, Chancellor
Grossmont-Cuyamaca
Community College District

“At all levels, there's been a real desire to listen and learn and share ideas.”

Ryan Griffith, Coordinator
San Diego East County
Intersegmental English
Council